



MATWATCH

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VOL. 4, NO. 8

FEB. 25-MARCH 3

Wrestle War '91

HORSEMEN CLAIM WAR GAMES WHEN PILLMAN TAKES POWERBOMBS

PHOENIX---In a reverse "star is born" storyline, the Three Horsemen and Larry Zbyszko captured the WAR GAMES main event over Sting, the Steiners and Brian Pillman Sunday night at Veterans Memorial Coliseum. But Pillman, whose "raw courage" story was built when he was ambushed on Saturday night's WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING, is launched on a major push.

The Horsemen/Zbyszko combo, working without the groin-injured Arn Anderson, won in 22:05 when Pillman was "knocked unconscious" from two Sid Vicious powerbombs. El Gigante dashed to the ring and asked for the match to be stopped.

But building on the Saturday WCW angle, Pillman was the major focus of the match. Arriving heavily taped in the shoulder, Pillman broke into the ring and virtually destroyed Barry Windham in the first one-on-one 5-minute round. Windham profusely juiced.

WCW world champion Ric Flair was the first to enter for a 2-minute advantage round. Pillman was twice shouldered into the fence and tossed into the first ring.

Sting evened things with a double clothesline and bulldog on both Windham and Flair. But Barry crotchplexed Brian until a Stinger splash creamed Flair.

Zbyszko made it 3-on-2 and was pounced on by Sting, who caught Larry Z with one of the prettiest Stinger fly moves of his career. Zbyszko rallied but Pillman applied the figure-4 leglock to Windham until Flair broke it apart.

Rick Steiner arrived with a double Steinerline to Flair and Windham. Pillman began choking Zbyszko into near-submission. Rick belly-to-bellied Flair and crashed him into the cage to heavy juice.

Sid Vicious' entry was a turning point. Sid and Flair doubleteamed Rick and Sid went after Pillman who fought gamely. Pillman rallied to crash Flair's head into the fence & bite the wound.

Scott Steiner, the last to reach the cage, double Steinerlined Flair and Barry, suplexed Larry Z and Steinerlined Vicious. Sting put the Scorpion on Flair but Sid applied a shoulderbreaker to Bri-

But Nikita Turns

LEX KEEPS U.S. TITLE

PHOENIX---In a surprising match of quality, featuring eleven near-falls and extensive power moves, Lex Luger defeated Danny Spivey with a reverse package from a press slam off the top rope to retain the U.S. heavyweight championship in 12:53 here Sunday night.

But Luger was hit with a surprise attack by the returning Nikita Koloff in a post-match presentation of a new U.S. title belt.

Luger began quickly with three blocks, a clothesline and suplex for a two-count. But Spivey rallied for two suplexes, a piledriver, neck-breaker for four near-falls.

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an and ripped Pillman's tape. But Brian rallied until all four faces applied the figure-4 on the heels. But the Horsemen/Larry Z quartet escaped.

Sting scored a military press slam on Flair but Sid dropped Brian on his shoulder from the top of the cage, then powerbombed Pillman twice on his shoulder.

Gigante, dashing down the aisle, checked Pillman, who did not concede, and waved his arms to stop the match. El carried Brian back to the locker room.

MATCH RATING: PILEDRIVER-PLUS....one of the most brutal and hardest fought I have ever seen, though these things end flat when the faces don't win.

Humperdink Returns

'BIRDS WIN; DOOM SPLITS

PHOENIX---Thanks to an errant use of knucks by Butch Reed, the Freebirds are two-time WCW world tag team champions after pinning DOOM in 7:55 Sunday night.

But the Freebirds' championship reign will last barely a month (see page 5). The win came when Michael Hayes ducked a brass knucks punch by Reed and Ron Simmons was decked. Jimmy Garvin scored the fall.

Lots of "Freebirds suck" chants roared through the building. Simmons and Reed kept up a strong pace and scored with several power moves: a Simmons bearhug, spinebusters and powerslams and a Reed military press on Hayes and backbreaker and suplex on Garvin for two of six 2-counts.

Simmons scored a spinebuster and powerslam on Garvin for near-falls saved by Hayes before all four entered and the final ending, which seals the building DOOM split of the last two months. Simmons shoved Teddy Long to the mat, then Reed and Long attacked Simmons to open a Reed-Simmons feud.

Prior to the match, Diamond Dallas Page introduced Sir Oliver Humperdink as Big Daddy Dink, the new "road boss" of the Freebirds.

MATCH RATING: POWERSLAM....could have gone longer but Michael and Jimmy could not get lazy in this one and lots of strong power moves here.

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LUGER KEEPS U.S. TITLE

(Continued from Page 1)

Luger rallied for a backslide and near-fall at 5:35 and followed with a suplex. But Spivey countered with an elbow from the top for a 2 3/4 count at 6:50. He followed with a neckbreaker, the Hogan foot in face and a piledriver for three 2 1/2-counts.

The U.S. champ then started a Herculean comeback after a Spivey belly-to-belly failed to gain a win. Luger powered several clotheslines until each man clotheslined the other.

Luger was the first to rise and climbed to the top turnbuckle. But Spivey revived to apply the Flair toss slam but Luger reversed it into a package for the win at 12:53.

MATCH RATING: PILEDRIVER...reminiscent of the Luger-Windham match at CHI-TOWN RUMBLE in 1989. Tremendous power match and well-booked.

POST-MATCH

Nikita, who had been introduced sitting next to Jason ("The Wonder Years") Hervey in the crowd, was to present Luger with a new U.S. belt. He did. He smacked Lex with it and knocked him off the stage. Instead of making it an out-of-date Russian-American feud, he told Tony Schiavone it was because "Lex Luger stole the belt from me four years ago." Angle was a bit too fast and needed more than the smack from Koloff.

WRESTLE WARBOARD

(WCW 6-MAN TAG TITLE) RICKY MORTON/JUNKYARD DOG/TOMMY RICH D. STATE PATROL/CURTIS HUGHES (9:54): Though the Patrol is a good-working team, they're still not up PPV level. But this was not a bad opener. JYD kept to a minimum and Hughes even threw a dropkick. Morton scored the fall when he grapevined Buddy Lee Parker's leg after a JYD thump. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

BOBBY EATON VS. BRAD ARMSTRONG (12:51): Bobby may be getting the biggest babyface reaction in WCW now. Chants of "Bobby, Bobby" as he walked the runway and he hasn't turned yet on TV. Fast early action as Bobby attacked and gave Brad a slingshot. Brad rallied. The match went outside twice and Brad was railed. But Bobby crotched himself at 12:00 and Brad rallied for a Russian leg sweep. But Bobby revived for a neckbreaker and a high-flyer for the pin. POWERSLAM.

ITSUKI YAMASAKI/MAMI KITAMURA D. MISS A/MIKI HANDA: The crowd didn't know who to cheer for but once they saw the speed and intrinsic moves of the Japanese women, the high spots had big cheers. The match had 14 two-counts and ended when Itsuki pinned Miki Handa in 6:50. POWERSLAM....no lack of action and the women only needed more of an identity build.

DUSTIN RHODES D. BUDDY LANDELL (6:31): The young guy is a hard worker and seemed to be cheered nicely. Landell took some nasty bumps, mugged and played the comedy well. Landell applied a sleeper at 5:40 but Dustin reversed it. He then clotheslined Buddy over the top, threw him back in, press-slammed him and Bulldogged him for the pin all in the last 51 seconds. POWERSLAM.

YOUNG PISTOLS D. ROYAL FAMILY (12:02): This one didn't click as well as some past Southern Boys matches as the Family's style didn't blend as well. Tracy Smothers was clotheslined over the top at 9:00 and kicked out of a spinebuster at 10:30. But as Rip Morgan and Jacko Victory tried a double suplex, Steve Armstrong dropkicked the heels from the top rope and Tracy pinned Morgan. DRAW.

(NO DQ) TERRY TAYLOR D. TOM ZENK (11:00): Not as much of an anything goes no DQ but still lots of good work. At 8:30, Tom was choked by Terry with the camera cable outside. But at 9:25, Zenk rallied to clothesline Taylor over the top. Zenk scored with an enzuguri and cross bodyblock but as Alexandra York jumped to the apron to distract the ref, Taylor sneaked from behind for a rollup and pin by holding Tom's trunks. Zenk atomic-dropped Terry out after. DRAW-PLUS.

[DANGER ZONE] PAUL E. DANGEROUSLY W. EL GIGANTE: Paul (dressed as a matador) spent four minutes insulting the Hispanics in the crowd, then taunted El until he swatted him with his sombrero. So, El picked up Paul and slammed him.

BIG VAN VADER DOUBLE DQ VS. STAN HANSEN (6:20): This could have been a great brawl had it gone longer and not had the cheap ending. Stan and Leon exchanged chair-bashing and soft drink crate crashing. But the two were DQed when they threw ref Pee Wee Anderson out. After, Vader missed a splash, Stan tackled Van and choked him with his bullrope. But Vader escaped and dragged Hansen down the runway with the rope. DRAW.

PHOENIX POOP

Dusty's a long way from Ventura or Paul E. or even Dizzy Dean but this WAS a marked improvement. After giving us one "in pul-lic, if you wee-yull" during the first match, he toned it down. He obviously watched the CLASH tapes, relaxed, did not force the Dusty dialect and allowed Ross to call the action...Predominantly good, action-filled show but I have several production complaints: 1) THE still does a horrible job of miking crowd audio; 2) the camera was following the Freebirds out of the ring when Simmons pushed Teddy Long down; 3) the camera was on the crowd when Luger was knocked out of the ring at a key point; 4) the primary ring light going out during the Family-Pistols match was at least amusing....Jim Herd took Nikita his contract Sunday....Arn Anderson had been pulled off the road shows and as late as Wednesday, Herd told me Arn hoped to go but would work light. But his groin pull is still too risky....Flair did not miss a night even though he spilled hot coffee on his leg....Herd estimated the paid crowd would be 4,500-5,000 but upper deck and some loge levels empties were in evidence on camera....Camera work excellent on WAR GAMES and Ross was at his peak there....Billy Jack Haynes a dead issue for coming in....Robert Gibson's return still indefinite....The angle with Missy Hyatt trying to score a dressing room interview with Stan Hansen fell flat but Tony Schiavone's reaction was priceless.

MATWATCH 25 SCALE

CROWD ENTHUSIASM	3.8
QUALITY OF MATCHES	3.4
ANNOUNCING	3.9
TOTAL PRODUCTION	3.2
OVERALL EXCELLENCE OF SHOW	3.6
TOTAL RATING	17.9

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TV
TEMPO

Feb. 18-24

(WWF/USA) - [PRIME TIME]:

New format with live audience & Vince McMahon returns as host; (TAG TEAM BATTLE

ROYAL) Nasty Boys win to earn shot at Hart Foundation at WM7; (SEGMENTS) Gene Okerlund takes "tour" of Washington; (From CHALLENGE) Roddy Piper teaches Virgil to stand up for himself; Viking d. David Isley; Rick Martel d. Dale Wolfe; (WRESTLEMANIA REPORT); (SEGMENT) Bushwackers give weather report; Big Bossman d. Barbarian but Haku runs in & heels leave Bubba lying; Shawn Michaels d. Demolition Crush when Marty Jannetty cross bodyblocks Crush as Mr. Fuji distracts ref; Tugboat d. Earthquake by DQ when Tenta bashes Tug w. Jimmy Hart's megaphone; (FULL NELSON CHALLENGE) Davey Boy Smith d. Warlord by DQ when Slick runs in but Davey slams Slick; (SEGMENT) 'Whackers model linen fashions; Kerry Von Erich d. Darryl Woodworth. BOMB-PLUS.

(WWF/SYN) - [SUPERSTARS]: Bossman d. Alan Martin; (UPDATE) Legion of Doom-Power & Glory; Undertaker d. Tommy Angel; Virgil d. Haku but Ted DiBiase refuses Piper's invite into ring; Smith d. Mike Wallace; (WM7 REPORT); Sgt. Slaughter d. Wolfe; [BRO. LUV] Randy Savage/Sherri; (VIDEO) Dragon. RESTHOLD. [CHALLENGE]: Dino Bravo d. Greg Valentine by DQ; (VIDEO) The Dragon; Jim Duggan d. Pez Whatley; Mountie d. Tommy Landell; Tito Santana d. Brooklyn Brawler; Martel d. Wolfe; (WRESTLEMANIA REPORT). RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(USWA/SYN) - [CHALLENGE]: {From MID-SOUTH/USWA TAG TITLE} Jerry Lawler/Jeff Jarrett d. Fabulous Ones for belts but Eddie Gilbert runs in & burns Lawler; Eric Embry d. Gary Young to earn shot at Texas title; Tony Anthony/Doug Gilbert d. Cody Michaels/Jerry Lynn when J.C. hits Lynn w. boot; Embry challenges for Texas belt but J.C. lures Dundee into ambush by Awesome Kong until Jarrett saves; U.S. Males d. Sweet Daddy Falcone/Dog of War but Anthony/Gilbert run in. RESTHOLD-PLUS. [BEST OF CHAMPIONSHIP]: Tom Prichard d. Lynn; Embry d. Michaels when heel ref Jamie Dundee knocks Cody's leg off ropes; Steve Austin vs. Danny Davis no contest when Eddie Marlin fires Jamie as ref. Jamie refuses to leave, so father Bill comes out & takes a belt to Jamie; New Kids/Bill Dundee d. Doug Gilbert/Brian Lee/Anthony by DQ when 8 heels run in & hold Bill for Jamie to strap; (ANGLE) Jeannie Clarke slaps Jarrett but Jeff blocks second slap & he & Austin brawl into ring; (6-MAN) Jarrett/U.S. Males d. Sgt. O'Reilly/Eli the Eliminator/Keith Eric. POWERSLAM-PLUS.

(PRO WRESTLING '91) - Fabian d. Black Assassin; Joseph Magliano double countout vs. Mike Winner; (From LPWA) Nasty Girls d. Malaya Hosaka/The Beast; (CLASSIC) Great Bolo draw vs. Danny McShane; Steve Lawler d. Rock Regal; (From LUCHA LIBRE) Miguel Rodriguez d. El Santos; Fabuloso Blondy d. Randy Rose w. loaded boot. RESTHOLD.

(LPWA) - Lady X d. Bambi; (6-WOMAN) Hosaka/Sweet Georgia Brown/Cheryl Russa d. Candi Divine/Rusty Thomas/LaGata; Susan Sexton d. Nasty Cat; Terri Power d. Denise Storm; Beast d. Magnificent Mimi by DQ; Bad, Black & Beautiful d. Misty Blue Simmes/Heidi Lee Morgan; (LOUISVILLE SLUGGER) Jim Cornette w. Nasty Girls. RESTHOLD.

(AWA/LOOKING BACK) - [1985] Scott Hall/Curt Hennig d. Jimmy Garvin/Steve Regal; [1983/HANDICAP] Hulk Hogan d. Masa Saito/

David Shultz by DQ; (1982) Baron Von Raschke d. Sgt. Jacques Goulet. RESTHOLD.

(WCW/SYN) - [WORLD

WIDE]: Terry Taylor

d. Tom Zenk by DQ;

(HANDICAP) El Gigante

d. State Patrol. Ric Flair taunts outside but flees; (8-MAN) Sting/Steiners/Brian Pillman d. Magnum Force/Jeff Stone/Rip Rogers; (From ALL-JAPAN) Stan Hansen vs. Big Van Vader; Michael Hayes d. Terry Brooks; Barry Windham/Arn Anderson d. Brad Armstrong/Tim Horner; Sid Vicious d. Rick Hardrock. DRAW.

[WCW PRO]: (From WWW) Zenk d. Joey Maggs but Taylor runs in; Taylor d. Angel but Zenk runs in, decks Terry; Hansen d. Jim Boss; (INTERVIEW) Paul E. w. Hansen. Stan chases Paul w. bullrope; Dustin Rhodes d. Joe Cezana; (7-MAN) Flair/Windham/Vicious d. Greg Sawyer/Keith Hart/Ricky Nelson/Maggs when Sid powerbombs all 4; Rich d. Sgt. Buddy Lee Parker; DOOM d. Scott Sandlin/Jeff Anderson; Steiners d. Randy Starr/Mark Kyle. RESTHOLD.

(WCW/TBS) - [POWER HOUR]: Ron Simmons d. Sandlin; (From WCW) Big Josh (Matt Borne) chases Royal Family w. axhandle; Sting d. Buddy Landell; (WNN) Gordon Solie w. Zenk-Taylor, El Gigante claws Paul E., Rhodes d. Rogers; Ricky Morton/Tommy Rich d. Anderson/Windham by countout when Simmons jumps Arn outside; Lex Luger d. John Peterson; Vicious d. Johnny Boyd. RESTHOLD.

[WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP]: (CUT-INS) Jim Ross & Dusty Rhodes from Arizona desert; Rhodes d. Kyle; Big Josh d. Cezana; Hansen d. Sandlin; (SEGMENTS) Missy Hyatt w. Sting in gym, then nabs a date w. El Gigante so he'll give her an interview; (7-MAN) Flair/Windham/Vicious d. Angel/Scott Summers/Larry Santo/David Isley; Bobby Eaton d. Boss; Zenk d. Joe Cruz; Pillman d. Peterson but Horsemen gang on Brian & Flair comes off top onto Pillman's neck; Taylor d. Robby Campbell; Danny Spivey d. Carl Robertson; (6-MAN) Morton/Rich/Junkyard Dog d. Bill Ford/ Magnum Force; Freebirds d. Hart/Rob Morgan. RESTHOLD.

[MAIN EVENT]: (SEGMENT) Cameras follow Missy on date w. El; (From WCW) Horsemen attack on Pillman; (CUT-INS) Ross & Missy in Phoenix. NO RATING OFFERED.

(USWA/WMC) - (From MID-SOUTH/USWA TAG TITLE) Lawler/Jarrett d. Eddie Gilbert/Embry. Eric ambushes Eddie after & pounds Eddie to heavy juice. Eddie rallies to make Eric juice but Prichard runs in & he & Eric double on Eddie. Lawler tries to save but is double piledriven; (ANGLE) Michaels doubled on by Prichard/Embry at interview set & posted; Jarrett d. O'Reilly; (ANGLE) Jarrett, Bill Dundee both try to talk sense into Jamie. Bill grabs Jamie, tries to shake him & is ambushed by Anthony; U.S. Males d. Eric/Scorpion; Embry/Prichard d. Freezer Thompson/Gary Jackson; (MID-SOUTH) Austin d. Davis when J.C. Ice decks Danny w. boot. Heels deck ref Frank Morrell but Frank revives & cleans house; (SEGMENT) Eddie Gilbert/Lawler agree to put up \$25,000 performance bonds each to team against Embry/Prichard at Mid-South Monday night. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(UWF) - [2/16]: David Sammartino d. Louie Spiccoli; Ivan Koloff d. Riki Ataki; [CAPT. LOU'S CORNER] Sunny Beach; Iceman Parsons d. Rob Starr; The Viking d. The Intern; Barry O draw vs. Jay Strongbow Jr.; Paul Orndorff double DQ vs. Steve Williams (all repeats except Orndorff-Williams). BOMB-PLUS.

[2/23]: Williams d. Robbie Allen; Bob Orton Jr. d. Stephan DeLeon; B. Brian Blair d. Spiccoli; (CAPT. CORNER) John Tolos; Nikita Koloff d. Spitball Patterson; Orndorff d. Grappler;

SCALE: PINFALL! - Must
See. FILEDRIVER - Excellent. POWERSLAM - Good.
DRAW - Average. RESTHOLD
- Fair BOMB - Poor
PLUS - Midscale rating.

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Billy Jack Haynes d. Col. DeBeers by DQ when Col. throws ref Larry Sampson into Haynes & attacks B.J. NO RATING OFFERED.

LINES OF THE WEEK

1. Bobby Heenan, PTW: "I've seen Alfred (Hayes) carry around 100-pound bags of dried prunes. That's so he can munch and run at the same time." 2. Heenan, PTW: "Imagine waiting 45 years for Tammy (Faye Bakker)? They'll have to send her back to Earl Scheib for more paint." 3. Tom Prichard, WMC: "Eddie Gilbert's father used to walk him to school every day. You know why? 'Cause they were in the same grade." 4. Jim Ross/Dusty Rhodes, WW, on ring light going out: (DR) "We're getting a new look." (JR) "Yeah, twilight doubleheader here." 5. Ross/Rhodes, WW: (JR) "Paul E. looks like a maitre d' at a Taco Bueno." (DR) "A bull would run from him if he saw him." 6. Prichard, USWA, to Michael St. John: "You don't need No-Doz when you listen to you." 7. Heenan, PTW: "One of the Rockettes? Right? Shawn Michaels." 8. Heenan, PTW: "I knew they (The Bushwackers) were here. There were about 250 cats in the alley." 9. Jim Cornette, LPWA: "Bambi is Lester Platt & Earl Scruggs' favorite wrestler but she's gonna have a Foggy Mountain Breakdown against Candi Divine." 10. Cornette, LPWA: "Candi Divine told me she'd been in Greece for two weeks. I told her I've been in a little hot water myself."

11. Steven DeTruth, WVEU: "Dusty, the thing I like most about you is your absence. Delta is ready when you are." 12. Rhodes, WW, on Terry Taylor: "He either needs his hair fixed or some data." 13. Prichard/St. John, USWA: (S) "What kind of a doctor are you?" (P) "I'm a psychiatrist of the ring." 14. Heenan, PTW: "This is where Lamont & Fred lived---Sanford, Connecticut." 15. Eric Embry, WMC: "You know what a scud is? It's a winner in the Miss Tennessee Pageant." 16. Heenan, PTW, on Bossman: "You wouldn't want him representing you. It'd be like Barney Fife being head of the FBI." 17. Paul E., WCW, on Big Josh: "When he was in the Great White Northwest, he was in midget-tossing contests." 18. Roddy Piper, WWF-SU, on Sherri Martel: "She looked better with a hat on." 19. Terminator Riggs, PWA, on Charlie Norris: "He told the referee 8 times he quit and if the referee had let him give up, he might not be in the pain he's in right now." 20. Michael Hayes, WCW PRO: "Lance, you have to agree with Jimmy because Jimmy signs your check."

21. Norman, WVEU: "I've wrestled all over the world. Some places they appreciate you. Some, they don't." 22. Joe Pedicino, LPWA, to Cornette: "Next week, remind me to bring a ruler to measure your nose every time you talk." 23. Scott Hudson, PW'91: "Ken Timbs has lost about 40 pounds...most of it hair." 24. Big Bully Busich, WVEU, on going heel: "I had a testosterone transformation." 25. Hudson, PW'91, on Busich: "This is a makeover that would make Adrian Arpel smile." 26. Hudson, PW'91, on PYT Frederick: "He'll never be mistaken for The Great Muta." 27. Arn Anderson, WCW: "Don't leave home with your back door open." 28. Ross, WW, on Vader-Hansen: "This is like a Saturday night special at an auction."

STRONGEST COMMENTS - 1. Mick Karch, SATURDAY NIGHT AT RINGSIDE, on what AWA can do to revive: "Most of all, they should stop considering it an embarrassment to be on SNR." 2. Lance Russell, WCW PRO, on Horsemen: "They ought to call the law & arrest these thugs." 3. Golden Idol, SNR, on Dale Gagner:

"MISS Dale Gagner---with an emphasis on MISS."

QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK - 1. Cornette, LPWA, on Team America's yellow ribbons: "What are they gonna do next? Have Tony Orlando as a guest manager?" 2. Fan sign, WW: "Hey, Flair, who cut your hair?"

HONESTY AWARD - Rhodes, WW, on Japanese women: "I said, 'I'm Dusty Rhodes, the American Dream.' They bowed and just went on about their bin-ness."

CHAUVINIST AWARDS - 1. Rhodes, WW, on Diamond Dolls: "Some good lookin' brown sugar." 2. Michael Hayes, WCW PRO, on Alexandra York: "We'd never take on no loose broad like that." 3. Stan Hansen, WW, on Missy Hyatt: "What's that heifer doing in here?"

REVERSE SEXIST REMARK - Hyatt, WW: "Let's see what babe we can interview."

NICKNAMES OF THE WEEK - 1. THE ROCKETTES (Heenan on Rockettes). 2. THE TENNESSEE LOSER (Prichard on Eddie Gilbert). 3. THE TAG TEAM FROM HELL (St. John on Eddie/Lawler).

BEST PICTURES - 1. WCW, War Games. 2. WCW, closeup of Spivey clothesline on Luger. 3. WCW, Horsemen attack Pillman. 4. PTW, Butch Miller modeling. 5. WCW PRO, Paul E. wiping tobacco from face. 6. LPWA, Cornette impersonating Don Cornelius. 4. WCW, Dusty in pool playing beach ball w. 2 women.

BEST IMPERSONATION - WCW PRO, Hayes doing Dusty.

ALL-CLICHE TEAM - Pedicino, LPWA: "What's good for the goose is good for the gander."

BLOOPER AWARDS - 1. Ross/Julian Bogan, WW sweepstakes winner: (JR) "Who's your favorite team in the War Games?" (JB) "Doom." 2. St. John, WMC: "LACK-ceration."

DREADED GLITCH AWARDS - 1. WW, ring light going out. 2. WW, misspelling Lariat as Lariet. 3. WW, Missed shots of Teddy Long shoved & Luger tossed out of ring.

BOO AWARDS - 1. Vince McMahon, PTW, for quoting Victor Kiam's tasteless remark about journalist Lisa Olson and blue material during PRIME TIME NEWS with kids in the audience. 2. Hulk Hogan, PTW, for comments on Scud missiles and suggesting Slaughter threatens to take kids as P.O.W.s. 3. WCW, for continuing to run WRESTLE WAR promo as is. 4. Arn Anderson, WCW: "We've loaded our warheads with chemical weapons."

Scott Hudson (PW '91) has become early nominee for best new color commentator.

He has a firm vocal command and makes his points forcefully and succinctly...Mick Karch celebrates third anniversary of his SATURDAY NIGHT AT RINGSIDE in Minneapolis in April. Here's a guy who deserves a look by a big promotion...WCW's 3.4 last week picked up 1.2 million viewers from FISHIN' WITH ORLANDO WILSON...PRO WRESTLING '91 drew a 6 rating in 18-34 age men in January on WVEU/Atlanta, the biggest number the station's ever drawn in that lucrative age bracket. It matched the young male rating for WHEEL OF FORTUNE and JEOPARDY! in Atlanta...May 19 PPV for WCW is a definite go for St. Petersburg...Poll released by Dallas-based Sports Marketing Group (2,058 adults surveyed) listed WWF wrestling as the most hated sport in America.

TUBE
TALK

Lose Before Winning**FREEBIRDS
DROP BELTS**

MONTGOMERY AL---The Freebirds, six nights before defeating DOOM for the WCW world tag team championship at WRESTLE WAR '91, lost the titles to Rick and Scott Steiner Feb. 18 in the Alabama capital.

The matches were taped for WCW television the weekend of March 25-26.

Several journalists say it's the first known instance of advance television taping leading to a team losing a title before ever winning it. Last fall, the Rockers defeated the Hart Foundation for the WWF world tag belts in a match never shown on TV after Titan Sports changed championship plans.

NAME CHANGE: Possibly by the May sweeps, the TBS Saturday night show name will change to SATURDAY NIGHT AT THE MATCHES, to distance it from the name of the organization.

RATINGS BUILD: Jim Herd told us last week he's shelved, for now, his idea of doing the Saturday show live. "It would cost us an extra \$10,000 a week to do it but it would be tougher dealing with our pre-emptions and abbreviations for the Braves and NBA playoffs." But after last week's 3.4 for WCW, Herd says, "I still believe we can bump that up to a 4."

HERD VS. THE SHEETS: JIM HERD MEETS THE PRESS is a go for April 27 on THE WRESTLING HOTLINE. Herd will go head-on with me, Dave Meltzer and Wade Keller. "You guys have two years worth of material to throw at me. You can't wait," Herd says. "It'll be a ball. I bet we'll have 25,000 calls."

MY TURN: I'll be taking calls live on THE WRESTLING HOTLINE Tuesday, March 12, from 7-8:30 p.m. (EST).

JAPAN PPV SNAG: VIEWER'S CHOICE is a go for the WCW/NEW JAPAN show April 7 for PPV on tape. But REQUEST TV, the other major pay-cable company, is saying it has no window for a show. WCW is expected to take it to RTV's president.

MORE SHOWS: In answer to PPV expansion plans by Titan Sports, WCW is apparently planning to add pay show-of-the-month events in June and August. Don't know specifics yet.

TITAN BUDGET PAYS: The WWF's first two added pay shows will be THE HISTORY OF WRESTLEMANIA and HULKAMANIA: AN AMERICAN LEGEND. Both will be 90 minutes, the latter to be done movie-documentary style.

PROMOTING THE BONUSES: The two extra shows (\$5.95 each) will be promoted the same as movies on REQUEST and VIEWER'S CHOICE with each to get 18 plays during their months.

MORE TITAN PAY NEWS: Titan will sell its budget pay events under the title Hot Ticket and they won't all be wrestling. Titan PPV marketing chief Skip Desjardin says they could include concerts and World Bodybuilding Federation events.

SPLITTING THE \$\$\$: Titan and the pay services will divide 55% of the HOT TICKET revenues. Cable operators get 45%.

NEW FIGURES: Paul Kagan Associates, a PPV monitor, says 32 PPV events in 1990 grossed \$136 million. Of that total, wrestling accounted for \$72.5 million (54%), boxing \$48.6 million, concerts \$11 million and movies \$4.4 million.

TURNER DEMOGRAPHICS: In a BROADCASTING magazine report, Turner Home Entertainment PPV veep Sharon Sidello says the average buyer of Turner wrestling also buys movies and concerts. "We're talking about predominantly 20-39 year olds who are upscale viewers with a variety of tastes," says Sidello.

FINALLY ON PAY: For last August's SUMMER SLAM, Titan test-marketed 10 cities at \$19.95 and ten others at \$29.95 while the national rate was \$29.95. Results (and we remind you, these are Titan figures, not independent samples): the \$19.95 markets and \$24.95 produced a 5.7% buy-in while the \$29.95ers scored a 5.2 buy-rate. Desjardin told BROADCASTING, based on the figures: "We ought not to automatically accept the operator's claim that if we lower the price, we'll do better." Of course, indie figures showed SLAM's overall buy-rate at 3.8%.

STEEL TUGBOAT: Fred Ottman heading to WCW but as Steelman, his old PWF role before going to WWF as Tugboat.

UPCOMING PUSHES: Brian Pillman will come out of WAR GAMES with a push for the WCW TV title and Bobby Eaton will get a significant babyface push by April.

TOO MANY BELTS?: I asked Herd if he isn't concerned, with the revival of the 6-man and jr. heavy titles, WCW doesn't have too many belts. Says Herd: "You can't have too many. The evolution has to be there. People want to see the guys have meaningful matches and I don't know any other way."

MONDAY IN MEMPHIS: Eddie Gilbert joined forces with Jerry Lawler against Eric Embry and Tom Prichard. The match was set up the previous Monday when Eddie was doubled on by Eric & Tom after losing the USWA tag title match to Lawler and Jeff Jarrett. But don't expect Eddie to stay a face.

PUNK ANNOUNCED: Terry Funk has been announced to defend the USWA belt March 11 in Memphis, against either Lawler, Jarrett or Eddie.

MORE CONFUSION: Saturday morning had to confuse Memphis viewers again. At 9 a.m. on WMTU, the Dallas show featured Embry as a face arguing with Prichard. At 11:30 on WMC, he and Prichard were big heel buddies with no explanations.

FRIDAY IN DALLAS: Embry won the Texas title from Bill Dundee with Tojo Yamamoto as his manager. Of course, it was Tojo whom Eric wrested "control" of the old World Class group to become USWA in 1989. No explanation of the change.

ALSO MONDAY: Tommy & Doug Gilbert went against Jarrett and Eddie Marlin, Frank Morrell vs. J.C. Ice, Jarrett defends the Southern title against Steve Austin, Dundee vs. Tony Anthony, Danny Davis puts up the light heavyweight title vs. Cody Michaels and U.S. Males face Brian Lee/Eli the Eliminator.

IN PORTLAND: Mike Winner, recently of GEORGIA ALL-STAR, debuted for Don Owen over the weekend.

DOING WELL: Steve Prazak as Steven DeTruth and Scott Hudson of PRO WRESTLING '91 did their first POINT/COUNTERPOINT segment for WVEU in Atlanta Saturday night. Prazak does a better Rick Martel than Martel.

MATWATCH

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WCW ROARS TO BIG VICTORY

Boosted by a weekend in which nearly all pro wrestling ratings were up across-the-board, WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING scored its highest rating since last March to win the weekly Nielsen cable ratings for the week ending Feb. 18.

WCW, which featured a Bobby Eaton-Tom Zenk rematch, scored a 3.4 rating and 6.6 per cent share of audience (the share was the best since last August), a 36% increase over the previous week's audience.

Sunday's WCW MAIN EVENT and Monday's premiere of the new WWF PRIME TIME WRESTLING tied in rating with a 3.0 but WME finished second by delivering more homes. WME's 3.0 rating produced a 5.5 share while PTW, with Vince McMahon back as host in a live-audience format, registered a 4.3 share opposite CBS' MARY TYLER MOORE 20TH ANNIVERSARY.

WME was the only cable show to lose audience from the previous week, a 3% slip from Feb. 10. PTW gained 3% from its 2.9 of two weeks ago but was down from the 3.1 posted by the WESTMINSTER DOG SHOW special Feb. 11.

WCW POWER HOUR tied its second-best Saturday ratings, jumping 13% from its 1.5 of Feb. 9.

RATINGS

RAP

Instant Review

NEW PRIME TIME:

WHOA, BOY!!!

Every few years, Vince McMahon tinkers with traditional wrestling TV formats. In 1984, it was TNT---the Johnny Carson/GONG SHOW hybrid with a sprinkle of wrestling.

In 1989, THE BOBBY HEENAN SHOW laid perhaps the biggest egg in WWF history short of the Gobbledy-Gooker with its mix of fatties, sleazebuckets and painfully unfunny insults.

THE NEW PRIME TIME WRESTLING (Mondays, 9 p.m., USA Cable) is an apparent attempt to blend TNT (without the live band) and HEENAN (with an audience for his barbs) with a poor-man's SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE. If the debut is a sample, the end result is enough to lift HEENAN SHOW to Emmy-worthiness.

McMahon has inserted himself as host with Heenan and in the opening effort, Vince was relaxed and far more tolerable than his carnival barker histrionics on WWF SUPERSTARS. Heenan launched several successful one-liners (and some which bombed). And PTW presented more competitive, if fewer, matches than in its previous incarnation.

That about did it for the plusses. McMahon didn't wait long to start the vulgarities. His addition of a "Prime Time News" segment (a la SNL's "Weekend Update") quickly portrayed New England Patriots owner Victor Kiam's joke about Boston sports writer Lisa Olson (comparing her to a Scud missile) as fodder for great laughter (to the audience's credit, it fell flat). Then, in full earshot of at least a dozen kids in the audience, McMahon and Heenan single out a woman who allegedly endured "nine hours of lovemaking with Willie Nelson," with a brutally blue remark about how the session ended.

No one can accuse McMahon of hiring Buck Henry. The Bush-whackers performed what was designed as a comic weather report but was about as funny as spending hours in a library. The best we can say for the skit is it was loud. A recurring set of blackouts with Gene Okerlund allegedly being toured around Washington by Barbara Bush and Nancy Reagan (Barbara looked like Bruce Prichard in drag) was deadly. And I still can't figure out why Alfred Hayes was there.

The audience may have been the biggest joke. Most of them were WWF employees and their families. If Vince was paying them by the laugh, I don't know who came out on the short end.

The two hours came across as an incoherent, non-cohesive mix and need serious retooling. Maybe Vince ought to consider bringing back the TNT band. I have it---first week on, they could play "Theme from World Championship Wrestling."

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CABLE

Week Ending Feb. 18	Rating	Share	Total Homes
WCW WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (TBS 2/16)	3.4	6.6	1.90 million
WCW MAIN EVENT (TBS 2/17)	3.0	5.5	1.68 million
WWF PRIME TIME (USA 2/18)	3.0	4.3	1.64 million
WWF ALL-AMERICAN (USA 2/17)	2.6	6.2	1.42 million
WCW POWER HOUR (TBS 2/16)	1.7	5.8	952,000

MATWATCH ANNUAL & SUBSCRIPTIONS

I have heard from at least 62 people who have their 1990 MATWATCH ANNUAL but the Postal Service has unmercifully delayed delivering at least 20 others from MATWATCHers I have heard from. Please understand: I have talked to my local postmaster and a trace is being put on all the ones reported to me as not arriving. It is as frustrating for me as it is for you. If yours does not arrive by March 11, please let me know on the back of a postcard.

We are going into a second printing of the 92-page annual. Please place your order by March 15. The yearbook is \$12.00 (U.S./Canada) and \$20 (Overseas).

WEEKLY MATWATCH

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